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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEEDS OF CRIME VICTIMS ADDRESSED IN SPECIAL SEMINAR

Nashville, Tennessee --- More than 550 staff members from the Tennessee Board of Probation & Parole (BOPP) will learn new skills to provide better services to victims, thanks to a victim advocacy group. You Have the Power is conducting three seminars for BOPP. They are funded through a generous grant from the Turner Family Foundation. The first, in Nashville, takes place on **October 9**. The others, in east and west Tennessee, take place over the next few weeks.

Tennessee Board of Probation & Parole Chairman Charles Traugher said, "It's important to get a fresh perspective periodically on the needs of the people we serve. Our people are professionals, but even professionals must learn new skills and techniques that make them better at performing their duties."

You Have the Power Executive Director Verna Wyatt agrees. "Arrests, or even convictions, don't magically bring victims to terms with the impact of crimes committed against them. If we can help people who work with victims daily to provide more effective service, it serves everyone involved in the justice process."

The goals of the event are to:

- Increase understanding of victim impact for all types of crimes;
- Enhance the ability of BOPP staff to respond appropriately to crime victims and to
- Provide a better understanding of what victims experience from the time a crime is committed until it has been resolved in the justice system.

The Nashville event is Tuesday, October 9, from 8:30am until 10:30am, in the auditorium of the James E. Farrell/Fred E. Westbrook Agricultural Extension Complex on the Tennessee State University campus. The other events are set for October 22 in Memphis and November 1 in Knoxville. Each workshop will feature a panel discussion with a crime survivor on each panel, as they are the true experts on the issues.

You Have the Power was founded by Tennessee First Lady Andrea Conte in 1993 as a volunteer, grass-roots effort composed of concerned citizens, crime survivors and representatives from the Office of the District Attorney, law enforcement and community agencies. Its mission is to raise awareness about crime and justice issues, and to work to prevent violent crime and reduce victimization.

The Tennessee Board of Probation & Parole is an independent, seven-member state commission. It is charged with the responsibility for deciding which felony offenders will be granted parole and released from incarceration to community-based supervision. The Board is also responsible for supervising felony offenders who are placed on probation by criminal courts. Its mission is to minimize public risk and promote lawful behavior by the prudent, orderly release and community supervision of adult offenders.